

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

for the

Southern District of Ohio

United States of America

v.

Lashawn Lee White

Case No.

2:20-mj-37

Defendant(s)

CRIMINAL COMPLAINT

I, the complainant in this case, state that the following is true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

On or about the date(s) of 02/11/2019 - 11/21/2019 in the county of Franklin in the
Southern District of Ohio, the defendant(s) violated:

Code Section

21 USC Section 846

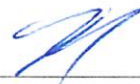
Offense Description

Conspiracy to possess with the intent to distribute 400 grams or more of a mixture or substance containing fentanyl.

This criminal complaint is based on these facts:

See Attached Affidavit

☒ Continued on the attached sheet.



Complainant's signature

Ryan Marvich, Special Agent HSI

Printed name and title

Sworn to before me and signed in my presence.

Date:

1-15-20



Judge's signature

City and state:

Columbus, Ohio

Chelsey M. Vascara, U.S. Magistrate Judge

Printed name and title

AFFIDAVIT

I, Ryan Marvich, being duly sworn, state:

INTRODUCTION

1. Your Affiant is a sworn Special Agent with the United States Department of Homeland Security (DHS), U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), Homeland Security Investigations (HSI). Your Affiant has been a Special Agent within DHS since the Department's creation in May 2003. Your Affiant has been assigned to the HSI Columbus office since February 2008, where your Affiant has been involved with narcotics investigations. Prior to becoming a Special Agent with HSI, your Affiant served as an Officer with the United States Secret Service, Uniformed Division beginning in January 1998. In June 1999, your Affiant accepted a position as a Special Agent with the United States Secret Service. In May 2003, your Affiant transferred employment to become a Special Agent with the United States Customs Service (USCS). In 2003, under the creation of the Department of Homeland Security, various components, including criminal investigators/special agents, with the USCS were merged with components, including criminal investigators/special agents, from the United States Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) and formed U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). Since then, criminal investigators/special agents and all related investigative functions of ICE have been moved into Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) within ICE.
2. Your Affiant has participated in and conducted numerous investigations of violations of various state and federal criminal laws, including the unlawful possession with intent to

distribute controlled substances in violation of Title 21, United States Code. These investigations have resulted in arrests of individuals who have possessed with the intent to distribute marijuana, cocaine, heroin, methamphetamines and fentanyl as well as other controlled substances. These various investigations have also resulted in seizures of illegal drugs and proceeds from the distribution of those illegal drugs.

3. Your Affiant is familiar with the operation of illegal drug trafficking organizations in central Ohio.

PURPOSE OF AFFIDAVIT

4. I am participating in an investigation concerning an organized group of individuals, including Lashawn Lee White and other known and unknown individuals who are suspected of conspiracy to possess with intent to distribute controlled substances, in violation of 21 U.S.C. §§ 841 and 846.
5. The information set forth in this affidavit is based upon my knowledge, training, experience, and participation in investigations involving the smuggling, possession, distribution, and storage of narcotics and narcotics proceeds. This information is also based on the knowledge, training, experience, and investigations conducted by fellow law enforcement officers, who have reported to me either directly or indirectly. I believe this information to be true and reliable. I know it is a violation of 21 U.S.C. § 846 for any person to conspire to possess with the intent to distribute a controlled substance.
6. The information contained in this affidavit is based upon my personal participation in this investigation, that of other agents and detectives assisting in this investigation, and my review of records, documents, and other information relating to this investigation.

7. Because this affidavit is being submitted for the limited purpose of securing criminal complaints and arrest warrants, I have not included each and every fact known to me concerning this investigation. I have set forth only the facts that I believe are necessary to establish probable cause to believe that Lashawn Lee White has violated 21 U.S.C. §§ 841 and 846.

FACTS ESTABLISHING PROBABLE CAUSE

8. On February 12, 2019, investigators with Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) and the Franklin County Sheriff's Office (FCSO) encountered Ruben Rodriguez Jr. who was found to be in possession of two kilograms of cocaine. Investigators originally located Ruben Rodriguez Jr. on February 11, 2019 while they were conducting routine surveillance at a Red Roof Inn located at 4530 West Broad Street, Columbus. At that time, investigators observed a silver Ford Fusion bearing Texas license plate KZB9897 parked in the Red Roof Inn parking lot. Upon running this license plate in law enforcement databases, investigators learned that this vehicle was registered to a Michael Rene Ponce in Buda, Texas. Investigators also learned that Ponce was arrested in March 2008 in Austin, Texas as part of a large heroin conspiracy case involving over a dozen co-conspirators. Ponce was subsequently convicted for violation of Title 21 USC Section 846 (conspiracy to possess with the intent to distribute heroin) and was sentenced to 57 months in federal prison. The law enforcement databases also showed no connections to Ponce and any individuals in Ohio.
9. Investigators began surveillance on the Ford Fusion on February 11, 2019. Investigators observed that the car was driven by a male, later identified as Ruben Rodriguez Jr., and a

female companion, later identified as Beslin Peraza, and surveilled them as they carried out various activities during the day. The two ate lunch at a Bob Evans Restaurant located at 4331 West Broad Street, Columbus, Ohio. They shopped at a Walmart near Hilliard Rome Road in Columbus. They then went to see a movie at the AMC Starplex Columbus 10 located at 5275 Westpointe Plaza Drive, Columbus, Ohio. Given the background of Rodriguez, and the history of the car, investigators suspected that the two individuals were making attempts to “kill time” which can be indicative as to drug activity, specifically awaiting delivery of possible drug proceeds. While Rodriguez and Peraza were inside the Walmart, FCSO Deputy Rob McKee ran his canine “Gator” around the silver Ford Fusion while it was parked in the Walmart parking lot. Gator gave a positive alert to the presence of narcotics inside the silver Ford Fusion. Eventually, Rodriguez and Peraza checked into a different hotel, the La Quinta Inn and Suites located on 5510 Trabue Road, Columbus, Ohio.

10. On February 12, 2019, investigators re-established surveillance on Rodriguez and Peraza as they traveled to 121 Stevens Avenue, Columbus, Ohio. Upon arriving, Rodriguez was observed entering this residence where he remained for approximately ten minutes. Following his departure from this residence, a deputy with FCSO conducted an investigative traffic stop on the vehicle Rodriguez was driving. During this traffic stop, a Franklin County canine gave a positive alert to the presence of narcotic inside the vehicle. During a subsequent search of the vehicle, approximately 2.0 kilograms of cocaine and \$30,006.00 in U.S. currency were discovered. In a subsequent post-Miranda interview, Rodriguez stated that he was in Columbus for the purpose of overseeing the arrival of cocaine and heroin that was being sent to individuals at 121 Stevens Avenue,

Columbus, Ohio. He admitted that the cocaine in his car had been sent to these individuals at 121 Stevens Avenue approximately 1-2 weeks ago, and he came to Columbus at that time to make sure these individuals received this cocaine. After they received this cocaine he went back to Texas. A short time later he learned that these individuals were not happy with the quality of the cocaine, so he was sent back up to Columbus. When he arrived this time in Columbus, around February 9, 2019, he was directed by his boss in Mexico to retrieve the cocaine that was already delivered and to oversee the arrival of approximately 2 kilograms of heroin that was arriving via UPS. According to Rodriguez, when he was inside the residence located at 121 Stevens Avenue, Columbus, Ohio, he stated that he saw the 2 kilograms of heroin that was sent. It was at this time the individuals at this residence paid him a partial payment of approximately \$30,000 for this heroin. This was the money seized by investigators during the traffic stop on his vehicle. Ruben Rodriguez Jr. was arrested on federal drug conspiracy charges, specifically conspiracy to distribute heroin, at that time. He has subsequently been convicted of this charge in the Southern District of Ohio. According to law enforcement databases, a Lashawn White was listed as an occupant during the time period that Rodriguez oversaw the cocaine and heroin arriving at the residence. The vehicle known by investigators as being used by Lashawn White has been observed at 121 Stevens Avenue during this time period. Additionally, investigators have learned that Lashawn White rented 121 Stevens Avenue on August 30, 2017 and as of the date of this affidavit, is still the current renter of this residence.

11. Additionally, investigators have learned that Lashawn White was arrested by the Ohio Highway Patrol (OHP) on April 1, 2018 after a traffic stop on Livingston Avenue in

Columbus, Ohio. During this traffic stop, troopers found a small amount (personal use) of cocaine in the vehicle and White had a loaded handgun under his thigh while seated in the driver's seat. According to the arresting OHP trooper, when the handgun was found, White stated that if they seized his gun, he would just get another one because he lives on Stevens Avenue. White was arrested at that time. He subsequently was released from custody pending further court hearings.

12. On September 30, 2019, investigators identified a residence located at 2849 Drew Heights Place, Unit #206, Reynoldsburg, Ohio that they believed was being used as a "stash house" for storage and distribution of narcotics that was being supplied by individuals associated with the Latin Kings street gang in Chicago, Illinois. While investigators established 24-hour surveillance on this residence from October 18, 2019 through November 4, 2019, investigators observed that no one actually resided at this residence. Investigators did observe Lashawn White frequent this residence numerous occasions while bringing boxes and bags into and out of this residence.
13. On October 28, 2019, at approximately 11:09am, investigators observed Lashawn Lee White and an unidentified black male arrive at the suspected stash house at 2849 Drew Heights Place, Unit #206, Reynoldsburg, Ohio. They were observed driving a maroon Mazda with Florida license plate BNUX60, registered to Avis Car Rental. Both individuals remained at the apartment for approximately three hours before departing. Upon departing, investigators conducted surveillance on their vehicle. At approximately 2:17pm investigators observed the Mazda arrive at 669 Kellner Drive, Columbus, Ohio. One of the individuals inside the vehicle was observed entering the residence using keys to gain entry.

14. On November 21, 2019, investigators executed a State of Ohio search warrant on the suspected stash house located at 2849 Drew Heights Place, Unit #206, Reynoldsburg, Ohio and located numerous empty wrappers which appeared to be wrappers for kilogram quantities of narcotics. On January 7, 2020, the Central Ohio Regional Crime Lab reported that thirteen (13) of the fifteen (15) packages seized from 2849 Drew Heights Place, Unit #206, Reynoldsburg, Ohio were found to contain methamphetamine residue. Based upon the training and experience of investigators and the size and shape of the empty wrappers, investigators believe that this was in fact at least 13 kilograms of methamphetamine that had been distributed prior to the execution of the search warrant on the residence.
15. On November 14, 2019, investigators executed a State of Ohio search warrant on the residence located at 121 Stevens Avenue, Columbus, Ohio. Upon executing this search warrant, investigators located numerous individuals inside the residence. Also found and seized from inside this residence were the following items (all weights are approximate): 180 grams of suspected powdered cocaine, 33 grams of suspected crack cocaine, 15 grams of suspected heroin, 30 grams of suspected methamphetamine, 21 tablets of suspected suboxone, 10mg/325mg Oxycodone tablets, 2mg Alprazolam tablets and five firearms. These drugs were packed for individual sale and it was apparent to investigators that this residence was being used as a selling point for numerous kinds of narcotics. Investigators found court paperwork in the name of Lashawn White in the living room of this residence at that time.
16. On November 21, 2019, at approximately 8:42am, investigators executed a State of Ohio search warrant at 669 South Kellner Drive, Columbus, Ohio. It had been determined that

this was the residence of Lashawn White after he sold cocaine to a Whitehall Narcotics Task Force confidential informant (CI) on or about November 16, 2019. During this CI purchase of cocaine, while under constant law enforcement observation, the CI met with an individual, later identified as Lashawn White, at a predetermined location and purchased 3.5 grams of cocaine from White. Following this purchase of cocaine, investigators conducted surveillance on the vehicle White was driving as he drove to his residence located at 669 South Kellner Drive, Columbus, Ohio and used keys to enter the residence. A subsequent field test of the suspected cocaine, provided by White, resulted in a positive result for cocaine.

17. During the execution of the search warrant at 669 South Kellner Drive, Columbus, Ohio,

Lashawn Lee White was the only person found to be inside the residence during the execution of this search warrant. Some of the items found by investigators during this search were as follows (all narcotics have since been tested and confirmed by the Ohio BCI laboratory): 484.44 grams of a mixture of fentanyl and Tramadol, 9.46 grams of fentanyl, 18.14 grams of cocaine, 23.71 grams of a mixture of heroin and fentanyl, 3 pistols, one sawed-off shotgun, \$20,363.00 in U.S. currency and numerous cellular telephones including a Samsung cell phone which was found on the master bedroom floor. Most of the narcotics found during this search warrant were located in a room which appeared to be a used for storing and preparing the narcotics for distribution.

18. White was at the residence at the time of the search. He was detained during the execution of the search warrant. White was read his Miranda rights on scene and he chose to waive his rights and make a voluntary statement. In the post-Miranda interview of Lashawn White, investigators mentioned to White that investigators already knew that

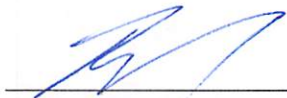
there were illegal drugs, guns, and money in the house. White didn't deny it. He was asked how much was in the house and where it was located. At this point, White asked for his attorney before speaking any further. Investigators attempted to contact White's attorney but was unable to reach him. The interview was discontinued at that point.

19. While the home was being searched, White's girlfriend, Antionette Horton, arrived at the residence. Investigators spoke to her in the front yard. She claimed that she didn't know anything about White having anything illegal in the home. When the room with the narcotics was brought up, she claimed that she never went in there and that was "his space."

20. On December 12, 2019, Your Affiant obtained a federal search warrant allowing investigators to examine the Samsung cellular telephone which was found on the floor in the master bedroom in Lashawn White's residence. In a subsequent examination of this cellular telephone, investigators observed numerous text messages consistent with discussions involving narcotics trafficking. These text messages include discussions concerning "zannie bars" known to be Xanax, discussions where individuals are asking the user of this cellphone for quantities of unnamed items (believed to be narcotics) and one text message where the user of this cell phone states, "Don't open my office!!!! I mean it... put the comb back and stay outta there.." Investigators believe this "office" is the room at 669 South Kellner Road, Columbus, Ohio which continued the narcotics. Additional text messages were located that stated by name that the user of this cell phone was Lashawn White. Photographs of Lashawn White were also located on this cellphone.

CONCLUSION

21. Based on the foregoing facts, your Affiant believes that there is there is probable cause to believe that Lashawn Lee White has violated 21 U.S.C. §§ 841 and 846, conspiracy to possess with intent to distribute 400 grams or more of a mixture or substance containing fentanyl. Accordingly, your Affiant requests the issuance of a criminal complaint and arrest warrant for Lashawn Lee White.



Special Agent Ryan Marvich
Homeland Security Investigations

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 15 day of Jan, 2020.



Chelsey M. Vascara
United States Magistrate Judge